



MINUTES
of the
SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL
WEDNESDAY 12 JUNE 2019
at
Murrindindi Shire Council
Council Chamber
Perkins Street
Alexandra
6.03 pm

** Audio recordings of all Council meetings are taken by Council's Governance Officers and published on Council's website. (Resolution of Council 23 January 2019)

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1. PLEDGE AND RECONCILIATION STATEMENT

The meeting was opened with the Mayor declaring the following Pledge on behalf of all Councillors:

“As the Councillors democratically elected to represent our community as the Murrindindi Shire Council, we are committed to working together in the best interests of the people who live in our municipality, who conduct business here and those who visit.
We would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the Taungurung Nation, and pay our respect to their Elders past and present, and its emerging and future leaders.”

2. APOLOGIES AND REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

There were no apologies or requests for leave of absence tendered.

Present:

Councillors S McAulay (Chair), L Dunscombe, R Bowles, J Ashe, C Bisset, E Lording, M Rae

In attendance:

Chief Executive Officer: Craig Lloyd
Director Corporate and Shared Services: Michael Chesworth
Director Assets and Development: Stuart McConnell
Director Community Engagement: Shivaun Brown
Manager Governance and Risk: Tara Carter
Manager Business Services: Graham Haylock
Governance Officer: Audrey Kyval

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil

The Chairperson declared Public Participation Time and invited submitters to speak as part of the Hearing of Budget Submissions.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME

4.1 HEARING OF BUDGET SUBMISSIONS

Diane Miller spoke to their submission regarding the sealing Cheviot Road.

Ken Deacon, Rubicon Forest Protection Group, spoke to their submission regarding tourism and events strategy proposal and the eastern end of Cathedral Lane.

Bev Dick, Rubicon Forest Protection Group, spoke to their submission regarding tourism and events strategy proposal and the eastern end of Cathedral Lane.

Ethan Fisher and Chloe Butterworth, Yea Primary School, spoke to their submission regarding a drinking fountain at the Yea Recreation Reserve.

RESOLUTION:**Cr M Rae / Cr E Lording****That the 30 minutes allocated for Public Participation be extended for an additional 30 minutes.****CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Ross Vaughan, Friends of the Great Victorian Rail Trail, spoke to their submission regarding tourist signage on Great Victorian Rail Trail (GVRT).

The Chairperson closed Public Participation Time.

5. OFFICER REPORTS**5.1 CONSIDERATION OF 2019/20 ANNUAL BUDGET SUBMISSIONS**

Attachment(s): *Budget Submissions 2019/20 Combined (distributed to Councillors separately)*

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of the submissions received in relation to the draft 2019/20 Annual Budget.

Officer Recommendation

That Council considers the submissions received in relation to the 2019/20 Annual Budget prior to its final adoption at the 26 June 2019 Ordinary Meeting.

Background

At the 24 April 2019 Ordinary Meeting of Council, Council endorsed the draft 2019/20 Annual Budget (Budget) for the purposes of public exhibition in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act).

Submissions were sought from the public and the draft Budget was made available at Council offices and on Council's website. The public exhibition period and submission process was advertised in a range of publications newspapers. Submissions were due by 31 May 2019.

At the time of preparing the agenda, six submissions had been received by Council. All submissions have been provided to all Councillors for review prior to the Special Meeting of Council.

An acknowledgement was sent to each submitter, confirming receipt of their submission and informing them of the opportunity to attend the Special Meeting of Council on the 12 June 2019 to speak to their submission if they wished.

Discussion

Six submissions were received in relation to the draft Budget. A summary of each submission is provided below:

No.	Summary of Submission
1	<p>Request to install bi-folding doors at Terip Terip Community Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new doors to the verandah would hugely open up the space to make it more usable for functions and events • centre is quite small but if the verandah space was incorporated, it would help to cater for larger crowds such as at Anzac Day and other functions held during the year • the cost of the project has been estimated by a local builder to be around \$20,000 and this amount is beyond their financial capacity • submitter made inquiries about applying for a Community Project Grant, told that these works need to be done through Council's Capital Works Program.
2	<p>Request that Council allocate funds to seal Drysdale Street between Lyons Street and Welch Street:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • distance is approximately 100 meters • submitter has been told that they need to get 60% of their neighbours to agree to contributing to the cost of having this work carried out • submitter believes that the chances of this consensus are virtually zero as most of their neighbours have the rear of their properties exposed to Drysdale Street • during dry weather the dust that becomes airborne is having some very negative effects on them - it triggers asthma symptoms on the submitter's wife.
3	<p>Request to seal Cheviot Road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheviot Tunnel increases traffic, and in particular, a dust issue • Council is actively signposting the Cheviot Tunnel as a tourist attraction • submitter believes that apart from infrequent grading of this unsealed road, Council does very little to maintain it • due to the increased volume of traffic given the rail trail/Cheviot Tunnel attraction, is beyond repair as it no longer packs down and therefore regardless of time of year dust is a huge issue for those whom reside there • dust lands on their roofs, contaminates their drinking water, causes health issues, covers their household goods and paddocks • aware that the next four years 'Roads 2 Recovery' funding provided by the Federal Government to Council has been announced but whilst the Council has other priorities the sealing of this road is a high one and can't be overlooked.
4	<p>Request for Council to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. establish, as part of the Tourism and Events Strategy, a Murrindindi Forest Tourism Development and Promotion Committee; and 2. reinstate a 2WD gravel road at the eastern end of Cathedral Lane alongside the pine plantation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • urges Council to do more to help protect what is left of the over-logged forests in our Shire, by developing and promoting their extraordinary tourist potential • suggests that Council would convene and resource this Committee which would be responsible for investigating promoting and where appropriate seeking funding for the forest tourism development initiatives • asked for the reinstatement of gravel road at the end of Cathedral Lane as Council's contribution to the proposed scenic loop drive from Cathedral Range State Park to Blue Range Road and back to the State Park via Tweed Spur Road.
5	<p>Request to provide funding for tourist information signage along the Great Victorian Rail Trail. (\$7,500):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of signage, both along the trail and within towns, has been a recurring theme since the rail trail opened • with 17-access points along the length of the rail trail, the Friends Group would like to address the need to build on the signage installed within Murrindindi Shire last year • seeking \$7,500 to install signage at five points within Murrindindi Shire and to work in partnership with Council to deliver the project.
6	<p>Request for a drinking fountain (bubbler) at Yea Recreation Reserve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yea Primary School has raised \$140 through fundraising • submission is supported by 19 students from Yea Primary School, each detailing reasons why they support the submission.

Following this meeting any proposed changes to the draft Budget as a consequence of the submissions received will be presented to Council at the 26 June 2019 Ordinary Council Meeting for Council's endorsement as part of the adoption of the budget.

Council Plan/Strategies/Policies

The public hearing of submissions is part of the required statutory process for the adoption of the Annual Budget.

Relevant Legislation

This process complies with the relevant provisions of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Financial Implications and Risk

There are no financial or risk considerations regarding the hearing of submissions.

Conflict of Interest

There are no declared interests by Council officers in the preparation of this report.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

The draft Budget was made available on Council's website and offices from 1 May 2019 and advertised for public exhibition in a range of publications, with written submissions sought by 12 pm on 31 May 2019.

RESOLUTION:

Cr M Rae / Cr E Lording

That Council considers the submissions received in relation to the 2019/20 Annual Budget prior to its final adoption at the 26 June 2019 Ordinary Meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd, advised of an item of urgent business which concerns the State Government Funding Agreement – Fixing Country Roads.

“We are seeking Council's consideration of this item at this meeting as we have received funding agreements from Regional Roads Victoria after this agenda was finalised and which need sign-off by 14 June 2019, prior to the next Ordinary Council Meeting. These agreements require Council resolution to commit capital expenditure in the 2019/20 year.

Under our Governance Local Law, Council may consider additional business at a Special Meeting providing all Councillors are present and vote unanimously to consider the item.”

Officer Recommendation

That the matter of Grant Funding Agreement – Fixing Country Roads be considered as an urgent item of business at this meeting.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Cr L Dunscombe / Cr E Lording

That the matter of Grant Funding Agreement – Fixing Country Roads be considered as an urgent item of business at this meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6.1 GRANT FUNDING AGREEMENT – FIXING COUNTRY ROADS

Purpose

This report seeks Council's approval of a funding allocation for Council's contribution to four road safety projects approved for funding under the Regional Roads Victoria Fixing Country Roads – Stage 2 program.

This item is presented as an urgent item for consideration at the Special Meeting as Regional Roads Victoria sent funding agreements for signature on the 6 June 2019, seeking return of the signed agreements by 14 June 2019, in order that 40% of the funds be paid in the 18/19 financial year.

Councillors have previously been briefed in relation to the grant applications.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. approve the allocation of \$755,900 in the 2019/20 financial year as Council's contribution to the following projects funded under the Regional Roads Victoria Fixing Country Roads – Stage 2 program:
 - a. High Street Yea safety improvement works
 - b. Rubicon Road route improvements
 - c. King Parrott Creek Road improvement works
 - d. Back Eildon Road improvement works
2. note that \$555,900 will be drawn from the unexpended capital works reserve
3. note that \$200,000 will be allocated from the 2019/20 capital works budget (rates revenue) and that this will be offset by the recently announced increase in Roads to Recovery funding from the Australian Government
4. authorise the Chief Executive Officer and Director Assets and Development (second signatory) to sign the Fixing Country Roads – Stage 2 funding agreement with Regional Roads Victoria for each of the projects nominated above.

Background

Council applied for and has been successful in being awarded funding for four projects through Regional Roads Victoria Fixing Country Roads program. The projects successful are as follows:

High Street Yea - Safety Improvement Works

This project addresses two issues; one is response to community concerns associated with safe pedestrian links across High Street, and the other dealing with improving the safety of the parking arrangements servicing the commercial area.

This section of road has recorded 26 traffic incidents in the last five years, with 37 injuries. Tourism traffic includes caravans, bike trailers, boats or horse floats in tow in summer. Many buses also stop in Yea each winter weekend.

This project will reduce the risk of collision and improve pedestrian safety by narrowing the through traffic lanes and providing pedestrian outstands at crossing points (reducing the distance pedestrians need to cross).

Rubicon Road - Route Improvements

Rubicon Road was identified as a regionally significant road by the Hume Regional Road Group in 2016 as part of work to identify key freight routes in the region.

Rubicon Road is an important collector road which serves a number activities including:

- rural living properties
- Rubicon Village (residential use)
- outdoor education facilities
- fish farming and general agricultural activities
- timber harvesting
- recreation and camping areas.

This project will improve the safety for buses and cars accessing tourist, education and recreation destinations. The project will reduce conflict with timber harvesting and other commercial traffic by widening and sealing the road shoulders and installing traffic calming treatment at critical locations.

King Parrott Creek Road - Improvement Works

King Parrot Creek Road is a rural link road providing important access:

- north via the Goulburn Valley Highway to destinations within and outside of Murrindindi Shire including Yea and Seymour
- south to Melbourne via Strath Creek and the Broadford-Flowerdale Road.

The Hume Regional Road Group also identified King Parrot Creek Road as a regionally significant road as part of its work. Sections of this road have been the location of fatal accidents.

The proposed works involves road shoulder widening and sealing in conjunction with line marking and signage.

Back Eildon Road - Improvement Works

Back Eildon Road is an important link road for tourism traffic. The travel time to travel to Eildon from Thornton is shorter via the Back Eildon Road than the Goulburn Valley Highway. The Back Eildon Road also serves other popular tourism destinations.

During summer, the number of people travelling on Back Eildon Road with boat trailers has increased. This has created some tension in the community either seeking a speed reduction or road widening. Public consultation regarding a speed reduction proposal, elicited strong opposition from those in the community that responded.

This project will widen the road pavement and seal the road shoulder at key points. This will improve safety for buses and cars accessing tourist destinations, improve safety for cyclists and reduce conflicts with oversize boat trailers. These improvements will help to support tourism in the area.

Discussion

As part of the conditions for receiving this funding, Council is required to enter into funding agreements with Regional Roads Victoria for each project. The agreements will bind Council in contributing \$755,900 to projects. Council's funding contribution is not currently reflected in the budget.

Council approval is required for the respective budget allocations and to authorise the signing of the agreement where the agreement commits Council to a financial contribution in excess of the relevant delegations.

Council has been requested to return the signed agreement by 14 June 2019, prior to consideration of the 2019/20 budget at the June 2019 ordinary meeting of Council. As a result, consideration of this item is required at this Special Meeting of Council.

Council Plan/Strategies/Policies

This matter is consistent with the Council Plan 2017-2021 Our Promise strategic objective to maintain Council's financial sustainability through sound financial and asset management.

Relevant Legislation

The *Local Government Act 1989* and the *Road Management Act 2004* provides the framework for consideration of this item.

Financial Implications and Risk

The total funding to be received from Regional Roads Victoria is \$1,511,800 and this will require a Council contribution of \$755,900.

Council has received notification from the Australian Government that Council's allocation under the Roads to Recovery program was increased in the 2019 federal budget, with an additional \$1,083,272 over the five-year period from 2019/20 to 2023/24. Council officers propose that \$200,000 of rates funding in the 2019/20 capital budget be reallocated to the four Fixing Country Roads projects, noting that this will be offset by the additional Roads to Recovery funding.

Council officers propose the remaining \$555,900 be drawn from the reserve established to hold unspent capital funds, typically savings or funds from projects no longer required, where the funds have not otherwise been reallocated. Currently the balance of this reserve is \$789,979.

Regional Roads Victoria advise 40% of this grant funding will be received prior to the end of June 2019 with the balance to be received during 2019/20. This will increase the surplus reported for 2018/19.

There is always a risk that Council may not invest enough in the replacement or upgrade of infrastructure to maintain services reasonably required by the community. The consequence of insufficient capital investment in renewal is a widening infrastructure gap or infrastructure that does not meet community needs. The allocation of Fixing Country Roads funding will assist Council in addressing these risks

Conflict of Interest

There are no declared conflicts of interest by Council officers in relation to this report.

Community and Stakeholder Consultation

Community and relevant stakeholders will be consulted as part of the delivery of the four projects, particularly the High Street Yea project.

RESOLUTION:

Cr E Lording / Cr L Dunscombe

That Council:

1. **approve the allocation of \$755,900 in the 2019/20 financial year as Council's contribution to the following projects funded under the Regional Roads Victoria Fixing Country Roads – Stage 2 program:**
 - a. **High Street Yea safety improvement works**
 - b. **Rubicon Road route improvements**
 - c. **King Parrot Creek Road improvement works**
 - d. **Back Eildon Road improvement works**

-
2. note that \$555,900 will be drawn from the unexpended capital works reserve
 3. note that \$200,000 will be allocated from the 2019/20 capital works budget (rates revenue) and that this will be offset by the recently announced increase in Roads to Recovery funding from the Australian Government
 4. authorise the Chief Executive Officer and Director Assets and Development (second signatory) to sign the Fixing Country Roads – Stage 2 funding agreement with Regional Roads Victoria for each of the projects nominated above.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

There being no further items of Business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 6.56pm.

CONFIRMED THIS

26 June 2019

CHAIRPERSON

[Signature]